



the partnership
for water sustainability in bc

Waterbucket eNews on November 28, 2023
<https://waterbucket.ca/wscblog/>

Living Water Smart in British Columbia:

*A vision with a task is the
hope of the world*

Note to Reader:

Waterbucket eNews¹ celebrates the leadership of individuals and organizations who are guided by the vision for **Living Water Smart in British Columbia**².

The edition published on November 28, 2023 featured Jody Watson of the Capital Regional District because she is the recipient of the Partnership for Water Sustainability's second *Watershed Moments Award*. The award draws attention to the vision for connecting people and place and recognizes her extraordinary contribution to environmental sustainability.

The umbrella for Partnership initiatives and programs is the **Water Sustainability Action Plan for British Columbia**³. In turn, the Action Plan is nested within **Living Water Smart, British Columbia's Water Plan**.



Cover Image Credit: photo by Cameron Stephens

¹ <https://waterbucket.ca/wscblog/>

² https://waterbucket.ca/wcp/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2017/11/livingwatersmart_book.pdf

³ <https://www.waterbucket.ca/cfa/sites/wbccfa/documents/media/81.pdf>

One-Minute Takeaway



"Major breakthroughs happen when decision-makers in government work with grass-roots visionaries in the community to create the future desired by all. Collaboration grows from a shared vision about the future and commitment to action. This is the 'top down and bottom up' approach."

Eric Bonham

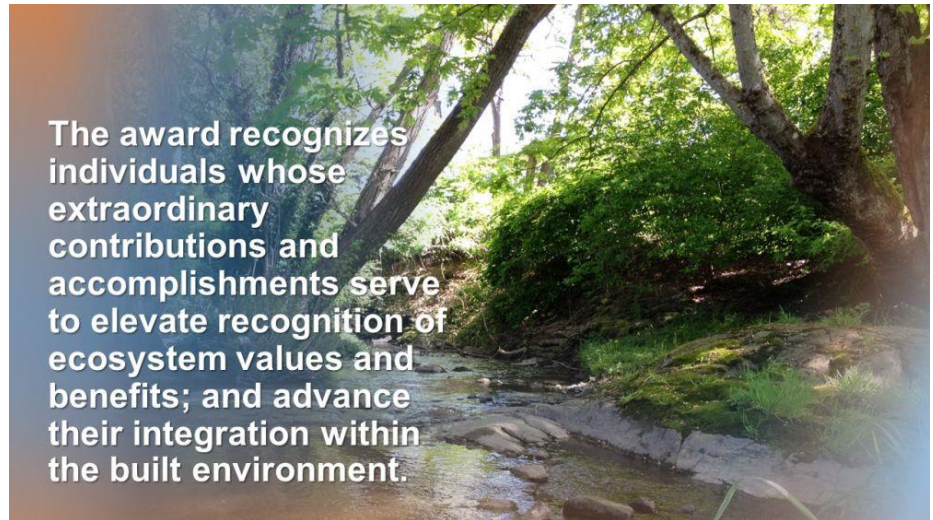
2023 Watershed Moments Award

"Early in her career, Jody Watson realized the importance and value of local government-community relationships built upon mutual trust, respect and common purpose," stated Eric Bonham, founding member of the Partnership for Water Sustainability, and a former Director in two provincial ministries - Environment and Municipal Affairs.

"The 2023 Watershed Moments Award recognizes Jody Watson for her extraordinary contribution to environmental sustainability within the Capital Regional District."

The Partnership for Water Sustainability's Watershed Moments Award honours the memory and legacy of the late Rob Lawrance (1964-2022), former Environmental Planner with the City of Nanaimo. In 2018, he was a founding member of the Watershed Moments Team.

The award draws attention to the **vision for connecting people and place** by recognizing the passion and commitment of those who excel in contributing to the success of the Watershed Moments idea and vision.



Connect people and place

Rob Lawrance had an extraordinary ability to connect with people and people with 'place', as does Jody Watson of the Capital Regional District. Jody is the second recipient of the Watershed Moments Award. She follows Kate Miller of the Cowichan Valley Regional District.

Just like Rob did throughout his career, Jody champions the embedding of ecosystem values within municipal planning, processes and projects. Both Jody and Kate represent their regional districts on the Watershed Moments Team.

The award presentation took place in October in Nanaimo at the inaugural **Ambassadors of the Partnership Forum**. The event brought together local government members of the Partnership from along the east coast of Vancouver Island.



Editor's Perspective by Kim A Stephens

A Vision with a Task is the Hope of the World

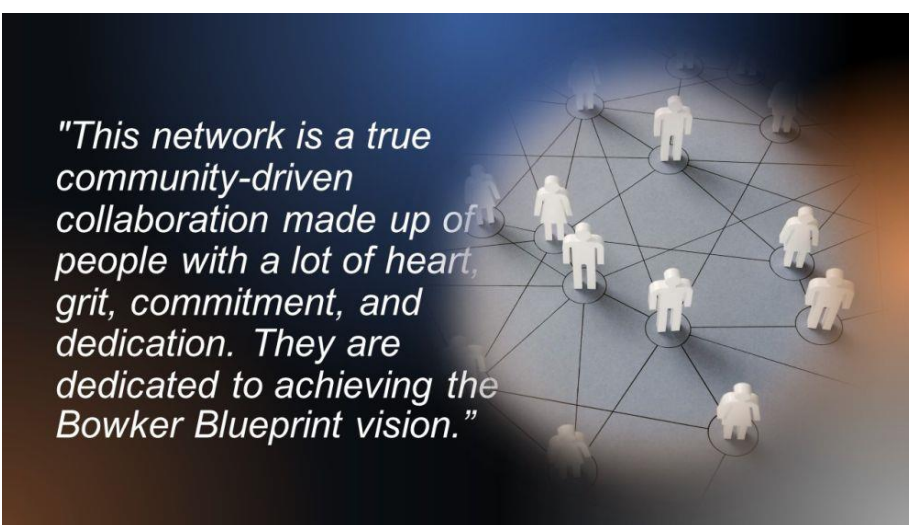
The 100-Year Action Plan for bringing Bowker Creek back to life through an **intergenerational commitment to a shared vision** is Jody Watson's pre-eminent claim to fame in the world of BC local government.

As chair of the Bowker Creek Initiative (BCI), Jody provided inspirational leadership for 13 years from 2005 through 2018. Without determined champions such as Jody Watson and her BCI peers, nothing gets started and nothing happens. Champions motivate others.

"The BCI is more than the people sitting around the BCI table," Jody Watson emphasized when I interviewed her in 2021 for [A Beacon of Inspiration: Bowker Creek Blueprint and 100-Year Action Plan](#)⁴.

Key words that capture the essence of the Bowker story are perseverance, dedication, and TIME in capitals. Changes do not happen overnight. It is a journey and journeys take decades.

"The BCI members are representatives of an extensive network that includes three Councils, every department, 11 community associations, and the CRD too," continued Jody.



⁴ https://waterbucket.ca/rm/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/09/PWSBC_Bowker-Blueprint_Beacon-of-Inspiration_Sept-2021.pdf

Jody Watson's legacy

I have known and admired Jody Watson for almost two decades. She is a great communicator. Jody always looks for opportunities to advance the mission, and she focuses on results.

When I met with elected reps on CRD's Environmental Services Committee in 2014, I described the Bowker Creek Blueprint as a game-changer and provincially significant.

The Bowker Creek Blueprint gave the rest of us a vision of what can be, I stated, and the Bowker process showed us how to give life to the vision.

In my remarks to the CRD committee⁵, I underscored that in my professional judgment there is nothing that equals the Bowker Creek Blueprint. The intergenerational commitment embodied in the 100-Year Action Plan is at the heart of Jody Watson's professional legacy!

“That is what makes the Bowker Creek Initiative the best. We are watching it implement organically and operationally, unlike how it was 10 years ago when we were always banging at doors and saying don't forget about the creek.”

Jody Watson, 2021



⁵ <https://waterbucket.ca/cfa/2014/03/22/bowker-creek-watershed-blueprint-provincial-game-changer-kim-stephens-informs-capital-region-elected-representatives/>

STORY BEHIND THE STORY:

What makes the Capital Region's Jody Watson special, a tribute from the heart by Eric Bonham

"Jody Watson, our recipient of the Watershed Moments Award for 2023, reflects the vision and determination that was the hallmark of Rob Lawrence's commitment to watershed health," stated Eric Bonham when he commenced his tribute at the inaugural [Ambassadors of the Partnership Forum](#) on October 25th in Nanaimo.

"It is exciting. Who gets to have a job where part of your job is to try and figure out how to get a creek out of pipes? Who gets to do that? Not too many! I feel so fortunate, and to be able to play a leadership role."

Jody Watson, Past-Chair (2005-2018)
Bowker Creek Urban Watershed
Renewal Initiative



Courage, Commitment, Collaboration and Creativity

"Jody Watson was destined to become a respected community leader. With early training in the naval reserve, she quickly learned the skill of self-discipline and determination, while still remaining true to herself in what was a male dominant environment."

"Jody Watson is an example of someone who reflects the best of public service, cognizant of political direction, yet equally comfortable engaging community in the development of WIN-WIN outcomes. So what are those leadership qualities that Jody projects? I refer to them as the **Four Cs**."

Courage, Commitment, Collaboration and Creativity

Courage: "To attempt, what may seem impossible, yet not be daunted by the challenge."

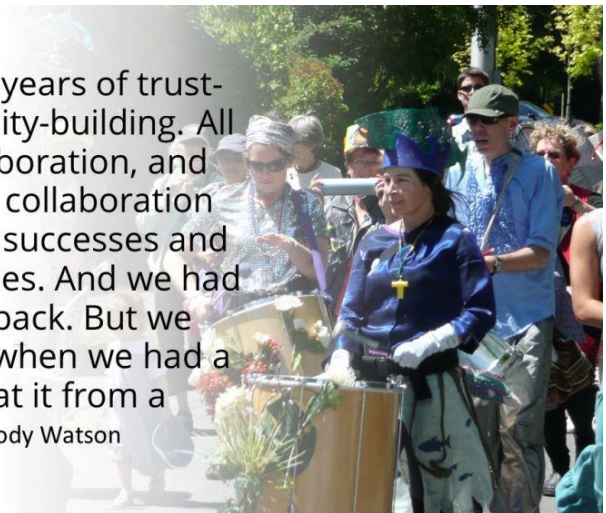
Commitment: "The tenacity to be in for the long haul, yet weather set-backs along the way."

Collaboration: "To inspire and engage others, and together, reach for the common goal."

Creativity: "Blend vision with task that results in making a difference."

"Jody Watson has consistently demonstrated these four qualities throughout her working career. She is a change agent, passionate about building effective partnerships, both within and outside of government. Early in her career, Jody realized the importance and value of local government-community relationships built upon mutual trust, respect and common purpose."

"We have spent 20 years of trust-building, of credibility-building. All that is part of collaboration, and that is what makes collaboration work. We had little successes and we had big successes. And we had more than one setback. But we did not walk away when we had a setback. We came at it from a different angle." - Jody Watson

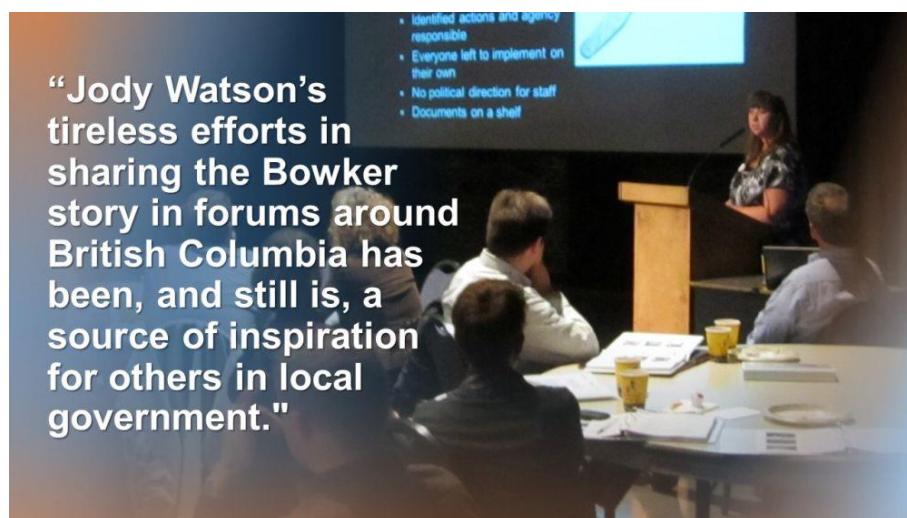


A vision with a task is the hope of the world

"Jody Watson is an effective spokesperson for the Capital Regional District (CRD) who has encouraged innovation and environmental protection, while recognizing a necessary balance with development interests."

"For example, consider the Bowker Creek Blueprint and 100-year Action Plan, where three local governments, Victoria, Saanich and Oak Bay, with their respective community leaders, embraced a shared vision and responsibility to rehabilitate Bowker by daylighting the creek and reclaiming the riparian corridor."

"With her characteristic vision and task focus, Jody Watson fulfilled an influential leadership role, particularly so, during the formative years of this groundbreaking initiative."



Four creative initiatives in the Capital Region

"As Supervisor of Environmental Stewardship and Initiatives at the CRD, her broad mandate includes public education, outreach on water conservation, integrated watershed management, biodiversity, stormwater infrastructure, invasive species to name but some."

"This responsibility involved engagement with community representatives where Jody's leadership was a contributing factor in the development of four creative initiatives, including:

- [Bowker Creek Initiative](https://www.crd.bc.ca/bowker-creek-initiative)⁶
- [Gorge Waterway Initiative](https://www.crd.bc.ca/GWI)⁷
- [Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative](https://www.crd.bc.ca/ELSI)⁸
- [Elk / Beaver Lake initiative](https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/elk-beaver-lake-initiative)⁹

Visionary and pragmatist

"In her role as Supervisor, Jody Watson is fully aware of this requirement, and has emphasized collaboration and teamwork at every opportunity. The initiatives are timely, and as a result, creative community partnerships are being forged to address changing circumstances, and indeed, our very understanding of our relationship with water."

"Jody Watson is an inspiration, an able communicator and mentor who **'walks her talk'**, a champion for innovation, noting the importance of ecological principles within the development process. Jody is both a visionary and a pragmatist, for the vision and task are equally important, and that is what makes the difference," concluded Eric Bonham.

**A vision without a task
is but a dream.**

**A task without a vision
is but drudgery.**

**A vision with a task is
the hope of the world.**

Church inscription, Suffolk, England 1786

⁶ <https://www.crd.bc.ca/bowker-creek-initiative>

⁷ <https://www.crd.bc.ca/GWI>

⁸ <https://www.crd.bc.ca/ELSI>

⁹ <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/elk-beaver-lake-initiative>



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Celebration of Our Story: Genesis / First Decade / What Next

November 19th 2020

TO LEARN MORE, VISIT:

<https://waterbucket.ca/about-us/>

About the Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia

Incorporation of the Partnership for Water Sustainability in British Columbia as a not-for-profit society on November 19, 2010 was a milestone moment. Incorporation signified a bold leap forward.

Over two decades, the Partnership had evolved from a technical committee in the 1990s, to a “water roundtable” in the first decade of the 2000s, and then to a legal entity. The Partnership has its roots in government – local, provincial, federal.

The Partnership has a primary goal, to **build bridges of understanding** and pass the baton from the past to the present and future. To achieve the goal, the Partnership is growing a network in the local government setting. This network embraces collaborative leadership and **inter-generational collaboration**.

The Partnership believes that when each generation is receptive to accepting the inter-generational baton and embracing the wisdom that goes with it, the decisions of successive generations will benefit from and build upon the experience of those who went before them.



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